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THE COLLEGE OF PRECEPTORS.

THE new buildings of the College of Preceptors in Bloomsbury Square are not unworthy of the largest examining body in the United Kingdom; for none of the universities or great educational corporations can show such an annual total of examinees. Nearly sixteen thousand men and women, boys and girls, were examined by the College during last year. Hitherto, the practical difficulty of finding room for the enormous numbers who present themselves at the various London examinations has proved almost insurmountable. The house in Queen Square has long been ludicrously inadequate for requirements of this magnitude. But in its new home the College is comfortably housed. The hall is spacious enough to seat easily a thousand students at the same time; and it is probable that the operations of this indefatigable corporation will develop into still more huge proportions when it is no longer trammelled for space.

Few people probably realise the work which has been so thoroughly, although so unostentatiously, performed by the College of Preceptors during its forty years' existence. In the examination of teachers alone, it has discharged a duty of incalculable importance. It is one of the many functions of the institution to provide facilities to the teacher for acquiring a knowledge of his profession, as well as to examine and to certify as to his fitness; and in this way it has more than fulfilled the objects with which it was founded. Then the half-yearly examinations of pupils, which is another distinct branch of its work, afford a most useful test of their progress, whereby both teachers and the public can form a satisfactory criterion of the value of the instruction received and given. In this respect, too, the College was a pioneer, for its pupil examinations were founded some years before the institution of the University Local Examinations, and even before those organised in 1856 by the Society of Arts. For more than thirty years, immense numbers of boys and girls have every half-year presented themselves

for examination, while visiting examiners are also appointed by the College for the inspection and examination of public and private schools. Another subsidiary but important branch of the operations of the College is the organisation of courses of lectures on 'the Science, Art, and History of Education.' In 1873, moreover, the Council instituted a professorship—the first established in this country—of the Science and Art of Education as a special subject of instruction. Lessons on the methods of teaching various special subjects are also arranged from time to time, and meetings are held monthly for the purpose of discussing educational topics. There is, too, a library of educational works for the use of members.

Established in 1846, the College of Preceptors was incorporated by royal charter in 1849, 'for the purpose of promoting sound learning, and of advancing the interests of education, more especially among the middle classes, by affording facilities to the teacher for the acquiring of a sound knowledge of his profession, and by providing for the periodical session of a competent Board of Examiners, to ascertain and give certificates of the acquirements and fitness for their office of persons engaged or desiring to be engaged in the education of youth, particularly in the private schools of England and Wales.' The charter declares that the persons whose names are entered in the register-book shall be members of the corporation, and constitutes them one body, politic and corporate, to have perpetual succession and a common seal. The corporation is, moreover, empowered to purchase and hold personal property, and, notwithstanding the statutes of mortmain, such lands, buildings, and hereditaments as may be necessary for the purposes of the College, provided these do not exceed fifty acres. The charter goes on to provide that there shall be a Dean and Secretary and a Council of forty-eight members, of whom one shall be President and three Vice-presidents, and one-fourth of whom are to retire from office annually. The affairs of the corporation are

managed and directed by this Council, which has the custody and control of the common seal.

So much may be said for the constitution of the College, as provided for under the charter. But it would be tedious to detail the curiously exact provisions made with regard to its management; it will suffice to say that so far these have worked well. And so, too, have the bylaws, which provide, amongst other things, that all persons engaged in education who have passed an examination satisfactory to the Council are admissible as members.

We have already indicated the two main divisions into which the work of the College is divided. As to the first, the examination of teachers, it may be added that there are three grades for which diplomas are granted—Associate, Licentiate, and Fellow. The subjects for the diploma of Associate include the English language with special reference to its grammatical structure; the outlines of English literature; English history with special reference to the leading constitutional changes; geography, arithmetic, the theory and practice of education; and either classics, a modern language, mathematics, or science. Candidates for the diplomas of Licentiate or Fellow pass a harder examination in the theory and practice of education, and have to take up two or three respectively of the extra subjects. Women—and it may be mentioned that they now form a large proportion of the candidates at the examinations for diplomas—are allowed to substitute either the theory of music or drawing for mathematics. From all this, it will be seen that these examinations afford a sound test of general knowledge.

It is unnecessary to go into further details as to their scope. It may, however, not be without interest to add that the subjects of examination in the theory and practice of education include mental and moral science, logic, physiology, lesson-giving and criticism of methods, and the history of education. As to the examinations for certificates, held half-yearly at various centres and at schools 'in union with the College of Preceptors,' it may be remarked that they are divided into five classes—first, second, and third, and higher and lower commercial. For the first class there are eight obligatory subjects, including English grammar, English history, geography, arithmetic, algebra, Euclid, Latin, and either French or German, Spanish or Italian, or Greek; and candidates may be examined in not more than five of the following additional subjects: Scripture history, plane trigonometry, mechanics, mensuration, experimental physics, chemistry, natural history, political economy, book-keeping, music, and drawing. The second-class examination consists of six obligatory, and not more than four optional subjects; and the third class, of four obligatory, and not more than four optional subjects; while the higher and lower commercial examinations are the same as those for the first and second classes respectively, with the substitution of a modern foreign language for Latin.

The higher certificates of the College are recognised by Her Majesty's judges and by the General Medical Council, so that the holders of them are exempt from the preliminary literary examinations held by the Incorporated Law Society and by the various medical corporations of the United

Kingdom. All first and second class certificates the holders of which have passed an examination in Latin are, moreover, recognised by the Pharmaceutical Society and by the Royal Veterinary College. In fact, the examinations of the College of Preceptors have come to be regarded as a sort of general preliminary examination, a fact that accounts in some measure for the enormous numbers who avail themselves of their advantages. It is satisfactory to know that the number of girls' schools from which candidates are sent up periodically is now very considerable, and is rapidly increasing. In the case of all female candidates, it should be mentioned that algebra, geometry, and Latin are optional, and may be replaced by any three other subjects.

The College has, indeed, already come to exercise a very appreciable influence upon middle-class education, and in its development will probably become still more influential. In giving cohesion to the individual efforts of private middle-class schools, it has accomplished a great work, the real importance of which has yet to receive the recognition it deserves. Owing to their isolation and their want of co-operation, private schools are largely lost sight of, whereas they perform functions which are every whit as important as those discharged by the great public schools. In the same way, too, so far as female education is concerned, the real value of the work done by the smaller schools is to a large extent dwarfed by the factitious importance which is given to the high schools and colleges.

It should, moreover, be borne in mind that the College of Preceptors has been the first to establish in this country a chair of Education. In the coming time, it may be that educational history and the science of teaching will form a necessary part of a liberal education. But it is not so today. Even the very names of many of the great educators have an unfamiliar sound. Sir Thomas Elyot's *Governour*, and Roger Ascham's *Scholemaster*—those two great authorities for physical education—and John Brinsley's *Ludus Literarius*, are almost forgotten books. It is as Provost of Eton that Sir Henry Wotton is remembered, and not as the author of *A Philosophical Survey of Education*. The *Tractate of Education* is the least known of John Milton's writings. Few except educationists have probably even heard of Sir William Petty's *Plan of a Trade or Industrial School*, which appeared in 1647; and Samuel Hartlib's *Propositions for erecting a College of Husbandry* are almost unknown even in these days of agricultural colleges. Of Comenius, who is perhaps the true founder of educational science, it is safe to say that few people know much. Nor has the influence of Pestalozzi and Froebel yet become so highly valued as it deserves. Here, indeed, lies a rich field of study, and this the College of Preceptors has made its own.

Two projects, it should be added, are at the present time engaging the attention of the Council. The one, the registration of teachers, has long been outstanding. As long ago as 1861, a circular of the Council brought a proposed Scholastic Registration Act before the heads of the principal schools in the country, and the plan has not been lost sight of. The second scheme is comparatively new. The Council, now that it has disposed of the building difficulty, proposes to

accumulate a fund from the surplus revenue of the College for the purposes of founding scholarships for intending teachers, and for the establishment of a Training College for teachers in secondary schools. But we have said enough to indicate the wide usefulness of this great educational corporation.

RICHARD CABLE,

THE LIGHTSHIPMAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'MEHALAH,' 'JOHN HERRING,'
'COURT ROYAL,' ETC.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—THE WORKING OF THE POISON.

WHEN Richard Cable left the *Anchor*, the hour was not late, but he had drunk more than his head could bear. He had always been an abstemious man; consequently, a glass or two more than what he usually allowed himself greatly upset him. On this sole occasion he had not exercised that self-restraint which was habitual with him, for on this evening the fire in his blood had urged him to slake it. But that was not all. He had felt real pleasure in being once more in congenial society—in society which exercised no thralldom over him, in which he was relieved from the suspicion that he was being watched and criticised. This sense of liberty after irksome bondage impelled him to relax, and for once to forget that there were limits he had been accustomed to set himself. He appreciated the kindness of the men he was with, and he sought to meet them on their own ground, to show them good-fellowship. As the fever in his veins cooled and his wrath passed away, he became cheerful, and for the first time for many days—happy. It is said that children brought up under stern discipline become dissolute when emancipated from parental governance. Cable had been for some time under discipline peculiarly galling, and now that for a moment he was free, he forgot that his liberty was not absolute.

Richard left the *Anchor* on the arm of Jonas Flinders, his brother-in-law. He was in good-humour. 'The yacht shall be rechristened to-morrow,' he said. 'She shall be called henceforth the *Bessie*—that will please my mother; she is *Bessie*; and the baby is called after her. The best of boats shall bear the name of the best of women and the dearest of babes.'

The air from the sea was cold; it fanned the hot face of Richard. The sky was without cloud. There was no moon, and many stars were visible; not that the sky was crowded with them, as on a winter night, because there was twilight in the heavens; nevertheless, many showed. The evening star twinkled. Sirius turned red and green and gold, flashed and winked like a diamond. The night was so cool, the breath from the sea so fresh, that Richard's hot head seemed to him to steam. 'There is the Big Bear,' said he, leaning heavily on the arm of Jonas, and pointing to the constellation known to every child. 'There

he is turning about on the end of his tail. He's got his nose high up now—he'll have to bring it down before morning. Often have I watched him go round like the sails of a windmill, when I've kept watch on board the lightship.—Jonas! I think I'm turning about myself, like the Great Bear; but my head is the point on which I revolve. It's a wonderful consideration to me, Jonas, that the Great Bear always knows what to do with his front-paws. They are the pointers. Draw a line through them wherever they may be, and it touches the north star. And when you consider that the Bear is never still, always turning about on the tip of his tail, I say it is marvellous! There is instinct for you. I couldn't do it. My paws are never in place. If I stick them into my pockets, I am wrong. If I put them down straight and stiff, one on either side of me, I'm wrong again. If I plant them on my knees, it is worse than ever. If I draw the back of one of them across my face, it is as bad as murder. Then, Jonas, whatever shall I say about my hind-feet, as Hezekiah Marriage calls them? I can't keep them anywhere where they do not give offence. I've curled them in a sort of knot under my chair where I've been sitting, and I was told I looked absurd—ill at ease. I've stretched them out straight before me, and I was informed I was uncouth. I've put one on one side of my chair and the other on the other side, and that was not right neither; and then the boots have been so smeared with rancid tallow, to keep out the water, that they won't do neither. I'm well aware, Jonas, in the sphere to which I'm elevated, that I'm looked on much as a great ungainly Bear; but I wish in that same firmament I knew how to dispose of my extremities. Oh, the agony of mind those extremities of mine have caused me! Why is it, Jonas, that no beast or bird or creeping thing has any thought about or difficulty with its extremities, but only man?—and we're made to believe he is the lord of creation.—I tell you what I think, Jonas—you're not laughing at me. It is in polite society only—we get laughed at and sneered at. It is not my feet, but *her* eyes that are the pointers; they are for ever pointing out my extremities, turn them about and put them where I may. Take her bright brown eyes and draw a line through them'—He checked himself, and said hastily: 'I'm not speaking of my wife; I'm not going to have her alluded to in this company, nor her name named, because your mouths have not been fashioned to pronounce it right, nor can your heads understand her ways of going on, and I won't have any commenting on and criticising of what you do not understand. We'll turn the conversation to the *Bessie*.'

The cold night air was affecting him. He who was usually so little of a talker, had become loquacious; but then for many days he had been afraid to speak lest he should commit a solecism, and now that the fear was removed, he talked a great deal.

'There is the light out yonder—or two, is it?—where I used to be in the boat. They have put another vessel there now, and another man is in

it. Why! Jonas, I almost wish I were back at the old work, cleaning of the lamp, instead of always being a-snuffing and cleaning and polishing of myself—and never able to get myself right, always smudges somewhere, and rust-marks, and smoke and smut. Out yonder, one day passed much like another, and all peaceable. True enough, we had storms, and I was tossed about; but there never was any storm and tossing about inside of me; and now it is all inward, and none without. I'd rather the billows ran mountains high and the breakers foamed over my head, than have the seas so heavy within.—What creatures we are, Jonas! When I was on the boat, I was always longing to be ashore with my little ones; and when I was ashore—somehow, I wasn't altogether sorry when my time came to return to the ship. So, I guess, when a man's a bachelor, he longs to be married; and when he's married, he looks back on his singleness with great longing. We always wally what we haven't got. Man is a perverse animal, Jonas.'

'Polly was a good wife. You think of her at times still—though she wasn't rich and accomplished.'

'Polly!'—Richard tried to recover himself; he was lurching against his brother-in-law. 'Polly was an excellent wife.—But, Jonas, I will have no comparisons drawn. If you mean to insinuate anything against my present wife, you make me your enemy for life. Polly was everything that was right and good in her way; and I have no doubt that—that *she*—her name is more than we can pronounce right, we uneducated folk—*she*—What was I saying? She also is all that is excellent in her way. We do not compare them; they are different.—Let us turn the conversation. The Great Bear stands in the sky, always a-turning on the end of his tail, which is a moral lesson to us always to keep the conversation a-turning.'

The two had nearly reached the cottage. Richard's talk became more disjointed, his walk less steady. The cold air ensuing on the heated atmosphere of the tavern parlour, exercised its usual effect. He had left the *Anchor* exhilarated; he was now intoxicated.

Was this the same Richard Cable who was wont to return home with raised head and even step, and whistling, to let his little ones know that their father was coming to them to kiss them ere they closed their eyes in sleep? Was this the same Richard Cable now reeling along the road maundering nonsense? What had occasioned this change? Only a drop of poison infused into his blood. The boys in *Æsop's* fable threw stones at the frogs, whereon one of the tribe raised his head out of the water and said: 'What is fun to you is death to us;' and so may many a man croak in his pain, when merry creatures pelt him with hard words: 'What is fun to them demoralises me.' Richard was already demoralised. His self-respect had met with a mortal wound. This self-respect was the stay which had held up all his other virtues. Strong in his manly dignity, he had been gentle, patient, self-controlled, modest, and temperate. Josephine had struck at his sense of moral dignity, and when that gave way, every grace that had leaned on it went into the dust at the same time.

A Spanish bull-fight is by no means the even

conflict of equally opposed antagonists that we supposed in childhood. The bulls have no inclination to fight; their disposition is peaceable. It is only after persistent and prolonged efforts, that the matadores can goad them into pugnacity. They endure without resistance the stab of knife and the prog of lance. They turn their heads away, so as not to see the fluttered scarlet cloaks. And we men are much the same—placable, indisposed to gore, ready to rub our noses against the hands of our gaily tricked-out tormentors, against hands wet with our blood. We thrust our stupid heads against their breasts, asking to be patted on our flanks or rubbed between the horns. We do not want to fight, not we! We would not tear away a ribbon or a lace, or trample on a bugle off the frippery that adorns our tormentors. We have been stabbed, but we submit to wounds, and when next goaded, limit our protest to a subdued bellow. Possibly, we shake our heads in threat, but we mean no harm. When at length, with cruel ingenuity, our pretty persecutors drive bars into the open wounds, and these bars are armed with crackers and squibs and Catherine-wheels; and when they dribble Greek-fire and flaming sulphur into our sores, then, in our agony, we toss our heads and paw the ground, and strike the barriers of plank with our horns, ripping them like rushes, and we race, bellowing, blinded, mad, round the arena—then woe to those who stand in our way; we are no longer responsible for our actions.

Bessie Cable was sitting in the cottage by the table, in the front kitchen. She had been cutting out a dress for baby, a little pink dress with white sprigs on it, a very small pattern; and Mary sat on a stool beside her, hemming the pieces together. The cut-out scraps lay on the table, some ready for Mrs Cable to sew together. Near her feet was the cradle, in which baby lay asleep.

'O grannie!' said Mary, 'will she not look sweet in this pink dress? And she will have a red sash and red bows on her little shoulders. She will be a sweet little rosebud, will she not?' Then Mary stooped over the sleeping child. 'Do, grannie! look at her,' she said. 'Was there ever such a darling! What a pretty little dimple she has! She is laughing in her sleep. I do believe she is dreaming about her new frock.—Do you think, grandmamma, that babies know what is going to happen? I suppose the angels do, because they are so near God, who knows everything that is to be. I daresay little baby-souls that have just come down from God can see a little way into what is going to happen, and that is why Bessie is laughing now—she sees the pink frock in which she will be so smart on Sunday.'

'I do not suppose babies see into the future, dear Mary, not even little pink frocks with carnation bows. I do not think it would be well for them. They would see many sorrows and pains; and then, instead of smiling in their sleep, their tears would trickle over their cheeks. They are happy because they are blind to what is to be.'

'Grannie,' pursued Mary, 'how do babies' souls come to them? Father took me outside one night and let me see the falling stars, and he said they were baby-souls coming down out of

heaven from the hand of God. Why do the falling stars always go out when they come near the earth?'

'Because, I suppose, they enter into the little bodies.'

'But—grannie,' Mary went on—she was a thoughtful child, and asked more questions than Bessie Cable had the wit to answer—'how is it that there are no rising stars? They are all falling, and none flying up. It ought not to be so. If we see the little bright souls come down when babies are born, then, when good people die, we should see their souls like bright stars mount up to heaven.—Have you seen them do that?'

'No, dear, never.'

'But why not, grannie?'

'Because the souls get so dust-clogged and darkened and stained with their sojourn on earth, that the brightness is dimmed, and God must clean them again before they shine.'

Mary considered a while, and then said: 'I don't think father's soul will need much cleaning, it shines so bright now.'

'Hark!' said Mrs Cable. 'There is his tread. —No; it is not his tread.'

A hand on the door; it was thrown open, and Richard Cable staggered in, without his coat, which he had forgotten, and left on the cupboard in the *Anchor* parlour. His face was red, his hair disordered, his eyes wandering.

Mary looked up, sprang to her feet with a cry of delight, and with open arms prepared to run to him. His mother laid her work on her lap, and looked at him with doubt and alarm. Mary was arrested by something in his appearance so unusual as to frighten her.

'Richard!' said Mrs Cable, 'what has happened?'

'She shall be christened to-morrow,' he replied; 'rechristened to-morrow—and called henceforth the *Bessie*.'

His mother knew what had occurred. The tone of his voice, the drawl in his speech, his position lurching from one foot to the other, declared it.

'Father, dear,' said little Mary, 'how strange you look!'

'Mary,' said Mrs Cable hastily, 'go away. Run up-stairs at once,' rising and catching Mary by the hand. 'Your father is—is unwell. You must go instantly to your room. Say your prayers by yourself, and pray for him.' She hurried the child to the stairs.

Mary went reluctantly; but she was a docile child, and did not venture to disobey. On the stairs she stood and blew a kiss to her father from her little palm. 'Grannie,' she said, 'he is not very unwell, is he? He will be well to-morrow.—Dear father, try to be quite well soon.'

'Halloo!' said Richard, staggering to the table, 'what have we here? A new frock for little Bessie! Ha, ha! Shall we have the yacht new christened to-morrow? No disrespect meant to my wife. No slur cast. But we can't pronounce the name right, so had better not pronounce it at all.' Then he went to the cradle. 'Bessie!' he said, 'come along and crow over giving your name to the yacht. A fine boat that answers her helm, as a racer does a touch on the bridle.'

He stooped, put his hands into the cradle under the child, and raised it out of its crib. 'There's grog in the captain's cabin,' he said, swinging the sleeping child aloft, 'there's water down below. —Halloo! at sea already—life on the ocean wave and on the rolling deep! Up we go! Down we go!' He lurched over.

'For heaven's sake, Richard,' cried his mother from the staircase, where she stood holding Mary's hand—'Richard, let the baby alone! Put her back in the cradle.'

'Don't you fear! The *Bessie* shall rake the stars with her topmast, and dance in the foam of the ocean. Sha'n't she, my baby! Up she swings with straining timbers, down she goes!' He lost his balance, fell over the cradle; and the child dropped from his hands on the stone floor, before Mrs Cable had time to unlock her hand from Mary's clutch and fly to catch the babe from his uncertain hold. The little creature uttered a cry and was still. But oh!—with a shriek, piercing, tearing through the house, frightening the children in their beds, the father picked himself up on his knees and clasped his hands, one on each side of his head, sobered in one moment of supreme agony and remorse. He knelt as one turned to stone, with his eyes riveted to the white motionless child, lying on the pavement, his face turned to the hue of death. Was the little one killed? Was it severely injured?

'Run, run for the doctor!' ordered Mrs Cable, coming up, yet shrinking from laying her hand under the fallen child, fearful what she might find.

Still, frozen, so immovable that he did not even tremble, Richard knelt, upright, holding his head, with elbows out, and gray lips unclosed, and blank eyes. The child lay on its back, with the little arms apart, motionless, with eyes fixed, and no colour in the face, no movement of the breast, no pulse beating, only a bubble hanging between the lips.

'Run, run for the doctor!' again ordered Mrs Cable.

Then Richard staggered to his feet like one suddenly roused from sleep, and yet under the influence of a dream. Still in his shirt sleeves, and without thought to put on his hat, he went to the door, and ran. He stayed at the doctor's door, but he did not wait for him and return with him to the cottage. He ran on, ran for an hour without stopping in one direction—towards Brentwood Hall.

BLIND JACK OF KNARESBOROUGH.

THERE is a wonderful law of compensation in nature, if we read her aright; for if she deprives us of one sense, she so quickens the apprehension of the rest that in time we are scarcely conscious of our loss. Blindness has ever been considered the most terrible of such calamities, from the utter helplessness and dependence it is supposed to entail upon its unhappy object. Probably the most extraordinary instance on record of man rendering himself, as it were, wholly independent of eyesight, and actually excelling in such pursuits as depend most upon the visual organs, is that of

John Metcalf, whose life, under the name of 'Blind Jack of Knaresborough,' has been recorded in two curious old tracts. As his sobriquet implies, John Metcalf was born at Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, in the year 1717. His parents were working-people; and when the boy was about six, he was attacked by smallpox, then a scourge as deadly as the plague. He recovered, but with the total loss of sight; but, strange to say, there was nothing in the appearance of the eyes themselves to indicate that they had lost their power; and throughout his life, no one ever suspected, from his look or manner, unless previously informed that such was the case.

By the time he was ten years old, he seems to have experienced little inconvenience from his loss; he could find his way about any part of Knaresborough and join in all the sports and mischief of boys of his own age. Having a taste for music, he was taught the violin. One Squire Woodlands took a great fancy to the poor lad, used to have him up to the Hall, and take him hunting; for, strange as it may sound, there was not a bolder rider in the county of York than blind Jack. No kind of sport came amiss to him. He learned to swim in the Nidd, and soon became so expert that he was employed to dive for the bodies of the drowned. He gained his living principally, however, by playing his violin at weddings and village merry-makings; and in 1732 he received an offer to play at the Harrogate Assembly Rooms. This was some forty years before the immortal Humphry Clinker paid his visit to the northern spa; but the description given by Melford of the public room where the company 'drink tea in the afternoon, and play at cards or dance in the evening,' would equally apply to this period. How primitive the company were may be gauged from the fact that the previous fiddler, the sole musician of the place, was nearly a hundred years old. Jack was highly successful, and soon made himself a favourite with the visitors and the resident gentry, to whom he recommended himself by his love of all kinds of open-air sports, especially those of hunting, cock-fighting, and horse-racing. He was a constant attendant at the York race-meetings, mixed with the Squires as an equal, betted, and was so fortunate, that he was able to buy a racer of his own and run him for small plates. He once rode a match himself for a heavy wager under most difficult conditions. A one-mile circle was marked out by posts, and this was to be ridden thrice round. Large sums were laid that Metcalf would never be able to keep the course; but at each post he stationed a man with a bell, and as this was struck on his approach, he knew exactly when to turn, and so came in the winner, beating his competitor, who had eyesight in his favour.

At bowls, which would seem to depend so much upon accuracy of sight, Metcalf was a great proficient. Yet more marvellous was his skill at card-playing, at which he became such an

adept that few could beat him. He played with cards on which the figures were raised; and his fellow-players named their cards as they laid them down. Boxing is another art that would seem to be unattainable by a blind man, and here again Metcalf upsets all preconceived ideas. There was a gigantic bully at Knaresborough who had constituted himself the terror of the place. One day he insulted a friend of Jack's in a public-house, whereupon the latter challenged him to fight. The fellow eagerly took up the glove, making sure of an easy victory; but in the course of twenty minutes, Metcalf, without receiving any injury himself, had inflicted such a thrashing upon his opponent that he howled for mercy.

Jack was a fine-made man, stood six feet two in his stockings, and was robust in proportion. Although disfigured by the smallpox, he was a great favourite with his companions of the opposite sex; but in consequence of some disagreement on this score, he found it necessary to quit Harrogate for a time, and took the opportunity of paying his first and last visit to London. While in the metropolis, he met several of his Yorkshire patrons; and upon his return to the north, some months afterwards, one of these, Colonel Liddell, who was on the point of starting on the same journey, offered to take him down in his chaise; but Jack gratefully declined his offer, saying he preferred to walk. The two travellers started at the same hour; but at every stage the pedestrian was in advance, and at nightfall put up, by previous arrangement, at the same inn as the colonel. On the Saturday night, the latter expressed his intention of resting through the Sunday; but Jack was determined to push on, and so arrived at his destination a day in advance of the chaise. This would have been a remarkable feat for a man possessed of all his faculties; but for a blind man to outstrip a chaise the whole way in so long a journey was little less than marvellous.

Jack had fixed his affections upon a Miss Benson, the daughter of a Harrogate innkeeper; and upon returning to that town, was greatly concerned to hear that her parents—who looked much higher for their daughter than a blind fiddler—had forced her (during his absence) into an engagement with a young man of property; that the banns had been published, and the wedding-day fixed. On the evening before the bridal morning, Jack received a message from his lady-love asking him to meet her that night in the neighbourhood of the inn; and there he had the delight of hearing that she was still faithful to him and hated his rival. Being a bold fellow, he proposed that they should run away together and get married in a neighbouring town; and the lady, nothing loth, consented. In the meantime, the bridegroom-expectant had made great preparations for celebrating the happy event, ordering a dinner for two hundred persons. But when morning came, the bride was not to be found; nor was anything heard of her until the next day, when the runaway returned as Mrs John Metcalf. It may be added, that she never repented her hasty act; for John made the most devoted of husbands, never forgetting the excellent home from which

he had taken her, and always doing his best to surround her with such comforts as she had been accustomed to enjoy. After his marriage, Metcalf purchased a house in his native town, but still continued, with the help of a boy, to constitute the entire orchestra of the Harrogate Assembly Rooms. He also set up a four-wheeled chaise and a one-horse chair for the accommodation of visitors, these vehicles being the first public carriages ever started there. About the same time, he entered into the fish-trade, making journeys with packhorses to the coast, and thence conveying his goods to Manchester or Leeds; and so indefatigable was he, that he would frequently walk two days and a night with little or no rest.

During the rebellion of 1745, a gentleman of Harrogate named Thornton raised a company at his own expense, to help to repel the invaders, and asked Metcalf to join and assist him in rousing the military ardour of the rustics around. Our blind hero willingly answered to both demands; and being sent out with a recruiting sergeant, worked so zealously, that in two days he had induced one hundred and forty men to join. And when the company started to meet General Wade at Newcastle, Jack, dressed in his blue and buff uniform, with a gold-laced hat upon his head, marched at the head of the company, fiddle in hand, playing *Britons, strike Home*, and other patriotic airs, which he accompanied with his voice.

During his brief military career, Metcalf met with many adventures. Captain Thornton's company was in the surprise at Falkirk, and was dispersed, the leader being taken prisoner, a fate which ultimately befell his faithful henchman, John Metcalf, who was captured by Prince Charlie's men as a spy. His blindness, however, obtained his acquittal, after which, though with much difficulty, he succeeded in rejoining the king's forces in time to be present at several engagements. Jack, from his affliction, was one of the lions of the army, and the Duke of Cumberland was greatly struck by the accuracy with which he kept step and performed all his duties. His musical abilities came in well when the Duke gave a ball at Aberdeen, where for eight hours Jack fiddled away to twenty-eight couples, eliciting frequent cries of 'Bravo!' and 'Well done, Metcalf!' from His Royal Highness, who had taken a great liking to the blind soldier, so much so, indeed, that had Jack chosen to follow him to London, the Duke would have taken him under his patronage. But after the battle of Culloden, our hero went back to his wife and children, to his old post as the Harrogate orchestra, and gave up soldiering for the rest of his life.

Always sharp and shrewd, however, he had picked up some ideas during his campaign which he quickly put in force; and as soon as peace and order were restored between the two countries, he journeyed into Scotland, and bought up certain articles of native manufacture then little known in England, and did a good trade in retailing them on the southern side of the Border. Those being the days of smuggling, he also did a little in the contraband line. Then he started as a horse-dealer, and was considered one of the finest judges of the equine race in Yorkshire; for so marvellously acute was his sense of touch, that he could almost unerringly judge an animal by

simply running his hand over it. Among his other ventures, he started in 1751 the first stage wagon that ran between York and Knaresborough, driving it himself, and performing the journey twice a week in summer and once in winter.

But not even these multifarious callings were sufficient to exhaust his energies. During his leisure hours he studied mensuration in a way peculiar to himself; and given the length and girth of a piece of timber, could with surprising rapidity reduce its contents to feet and inches. These studies suggested to him the idea of road-making. His first essay was a piece of three miles in length between Fearnby and Minship. He was perfectly successful; and hearing that a new bridge was to be constructed at Boroughbridge, he applied for the contract. 'What do you know about bridge-making?' was the half-contemptuous question his application was greeted with. With the most perfect lucidity, and on purely scientific principles, he explained his plans, and obtained the work. There was another piece of road which all the surveyors had pronounced impossible to construct, on account of the underlying bog; but Jack undertook to accomplish the task; and by making a foundation of brushwood—an idea that at that time it would seem had not occurred to any one—he succeeded in making a perfectly firm and dry causeway. For many years he now solely devoted himself to repairing and making roads and bridges in different parts of Lancashire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, and Yorkshire.

Though arrived at a somewhat advanced age, Metcalf could not even yet conquer his restless disposition. One of his daughters had married a man in the cotton business, and he was at once seized with a desire to embark in cotton speculations; so, in 1781 he bought spinning-jennies and a carding-engine, spun yarn and manufactured calicoes and printed goods, and took them to Knaresborough to sell, sometimes carrying as much as five stoneweight for many miles. He continued to live with this daughter in Cheshire until 1792, when he returned to his native county, and settled, with another married daughter, at Spofforth, near Wetherby. He now employed himself buying hay and timber-trees. He would measure the stacks with his arms, ascertain the height, and then calculate the number of solid feet they contained. He went through a similar process with the timber. In the year 1800, being then eighty-three years old, he determined to pay a visit to York, in which he had not set foot for thirty-two years; yet he found his way about the streets with perfect ease. During his peregrinations, he passed along a certain road which he had not traversed for sixty years, yet such was his marvellous memory, that he discovered a difference in the hanging of the gates leading to a gentleman's mansion he used to visit as a youth. Going among such of his old friends as were yet in the land of the living, he proved to be as cheerful and convivial as ever, playing his fiddle for the young people to dance to, and thoroughly enjoying the sport himself. Still firm on his legs, he trudged all the way from York to Knaresborough, doing his ten miles in three and a half hours. Long ere this, in 1788, he had lost his faithful partner, who preceded him to the grave by twenty-two

years, for it was not until 1810 that this extraordinary man, hale and hearty and in full possession of his faculties almost to the last, passed away.

CHECKMATED.

CHAPTER I.

THE position of Mr David Chester—sometimes known as 'old Davy,' and very often as 'old Chester'—at the time our story opens was one which is only too common, is very sad and hard to bear, and which receives less sympathy than should be awarded to it. He was a clerk out of a situation, and not likely soon to obtain one; for he was turned fifty-five years, and with his thin gray hair and spare wrinkled face looked fully his age. Now, too, he had grown shabby, although decently so, and this added in no slight degree to the difficulty, which needed no addition.

Everywhere it was the same story—he was too old. David strove to show that his experience made him valuable, and that he would come cheap; but he knew beforehand, without the bitter experience he soon obtained, that there is not much virtue in arguments addressed, under such circumstances, to possible employers. 'We prefer younger clerks,' was a reply which could not be gainsaid.

So on one particular day—which, however, was not special in its character—he was standing in Cheapside, hesitating which of two visits he should pay first. A friend had told him that a certain firm was taking on clerks for temporary work, and he thought Chester would be just the man for them. So David went to this house first. He was not kept long in suspense. 'All openings filled,' settled the matter; but, in addition, the clerk who spoke to him added cheerfully: 'We have turned away nigh upon a hundred fellows to-day.' Poor Chester having grown used to these rebuffs, the sting was not so keen as it once had been; nevertheless, he was a trifle more depressed in his air as he left the counting-house.

His next visit was to Brisby, Gadham, & Co., merchants and Indian agents in Great St Amyott's Court. This was a more trying and, he feared, even a more hopeless visit than the other; for David had served the house when old Peter Gadham ruled there—there had been no Brisby for many years—and had sat for fully a quarter of a century in the dull, sky-lighted office; and with no great salary, no great ambition, perhaps with no great abilities, had jogged on contentedly enough. But old Gadham died. His heirs and successors, on coming into the business, saw that the staff were a drony lot, a long way behind the age; and as they wanted a more go-ahead set of people about them, most of the clerks were dismissed.

David Chester would doubtless have received his dismissal in any case. In old Gadham's family there had been jealousies and heartburnings, such as will gather where the wealth of a bad-tempered, tyrannical old man is coveted and hungered for by a circle of relations; and there had been deeper cause even than this for ill-blood. We

need not go very closely into these matters; it will be enough to say that the son of old Gadham, his only son, who naturally expected—or at one time had done so—to inherit his father's wealth and business, was wholly excluded, and another branch of the family succeeded. It need hardly be said that there was a great deal of ill-feeling over such an arrangement; and as David was supposed to be a partisan of young Ernest Gadham, he was a marked man with the new people. Poor David was wrongly suspected, for he really disliked the young man, who, if only half of what was said of him was true, quite deserved the treatment he had received—was, indeed, let off easily. But some circumstances had given David the repute of being Mr Ernest's adherent, and he was accordingly the first to be paid his month's salary in lieu of notice.

The reader can now understand the clerk's reluctance to call on this firm to ask the boon of some employment as messenger, office-keeper, or anything, in their own or some other warehouse. He had called upon them several times, meeting scant encouragement, but had not tried such an appeal as this, the making of which was terribly painful.

He saw the head-clerk, which he deemed fortunate, inasmuch as this gentleman was well disposed to David and sorry for his ill-luck. He listened to the story the clerk had to tell; told with some sorrowful touches which showed the need of the applicant.

'Upon my word, Chester, I hardly know what to say,' began the head-clerk. 'Things are dreadfully flat; yet, if'—He ceased abruptly; and David, looking round, saw that the head of the firm had entered the office.

This was a portly but harsh-looking gentleman, over whose features came a sterner cast as he met the visitor's eyes. 'Chester here again! What does he want now?' This was of course addressed to the head-clerk, who told in very few words the substance of what he had just heard; and David sought to add something about his long service in the firm; but the principal, either not hearing or not heeding him, said: 'I thought you understood, Chester, that there was nothing for you here. You had better understand it now for good and all; and I do not care about finding you hanging round the place.' As he finished, the principal turned and left the office by his private door, as he had entered, without speaking further to the head-clerk, a pretty clear proof that he was out of temper. So the head-clerk looked at David and shook his head ruefully; and the unlucky visitor left the office, mortified and ashamed.

'He always has been a bitter enemy to me,' muttered David, as he plodded on his long, fagging, familiar walk to Kentish Town, where he lived. His worn and wearied look, as he entered his little parlour, told his story plainly enough to Josie, his daughter, the whir of whose sewing-machine, audible enough in the passage, had ceased when he appeared.

'Well, father,' exclaimed the girl, assuming a cheerful smile, 'have you any good news to-day?—Never mind,' she continued, as he shook his head dolefully; 'business will be brisker soon, and then you will be all right. I have had some fresh work in to-day, so there is some

good news.—Now, have your tea; it is all ready.'

Whatever other desirable properties might be lacking to David, he usually possessed a good appetite, this, not unfrequently, when it was rather inconvenient; but to-day he could make no way with his little stew, savoury though it was; and his daughter, checking herself in her cheerful gossip, asked him if he were ill, or had over-walked himself, or had had one of those nasty headaches again.

'No, Josie,' returned her father; 'I have suffered from nothing, and nothing has happened that might not have been foreseen. I was foolish enough to try again at Gadham's; and Mr Robinson, the chief bookkeeper, would have listened to me; but Mr Gadham came in.' He then detailed, with perhaps some added colouring, the unpleasant interview with the head of the firm, his daughter making various sympathetic comments as he proceeded. 'It is all through that business of Mr Ernest and his father,' David concluded. 'Because it is known I was the one generally chosen to take messages backwards and forwards, after the quarrel—which I could not help—these people think I was all on Ernest's side, and tried to prejudice the old man against them. I have always said, that while Mr Ernest behaved very wrongly, especially in drawing bills or cheques on his father without permission, yet he did this for no great sum, and, as an only child, he took liberties. But he was punished too severely—too severely for that fault, Josie. Yet he was not a good young man. But there!' he exclaimed, rallying with an effort, 'I need not go over all this again. Let me eat my dinner, and be thankful I have such a nice dinner to eat.'

Josie resumed her sewing-machine; and after finishing his meal, David sat and smoked his pipe by the open window, for it was summer-time; and a belt of garden lying between the house and the pavement of the quiet street, made the lookout quite secluded, if not absolutely country-like.

Josie being busy, and David occupied with his own thoughts, they had not spoken for some time, until the garden gate creaking, the latter looked up, and saw Minnie coming in. 'And some one with her, Josie!' he exclaimed. 'A man. Who could it be?'

A knock following, he rose to open the door; and Josie, pausing to listen, turned scarlet—she was usually pale—which grew deeper in colour as she heard a laugh at the door, with an exclamation of surprise from her father: 'Come in, my boy! Come in, and let us have a good look at you! Who would have dreamed of seeing you so soon!—Why, Josie, it is Geoffrey—Geoffrey Coyne!'

Minnie, a girl of sixteen, but a big and bounding lass, came first, and was followed by a well-built, good-looking young fellow of some three or four and twenty. His bronzed cheeks and a certain roll in his gait bespoke the stranger to be of the 'seafaring persuasion,' as indeed he was, being employed on a large ship as clerk, store-keeper, purser, or whatever the proper nautical description may be.

'Yes, here I am!' he exclaimed.—'And how are you, Mr Chester? I met Minnie at the top

of the street; she could not say anything then, but I know she is glad to see me.' With this he kissed the smiling Minnie; and having previously shaken hands with Chester, there was no reason why he should not kiss Josie as well.

The sewing-machine was at once abandoned, and Geoffrey became the centre of the little group, telling of his adventures, his promotion, his hopes for the future, which latter, from his appealing so often to Josie, who sat by his side, included perhaps more than he brought prominently forward. It appeared that the young fellow's mother had been for many years housekeeper to the chief owner of the 'line' in which Geoffrey was employed, and from this humble but creditable influence, his position was secure, and his advancement had been rapid. Even the ill success of David was brightened with a tinge of the cheerfulness which the newcomer diffused around him.

'We will soon make that all right!' he cried, with a hearty slap on the old fellow's shoulder. 'I will see our owner; and if you would like to have something down at the waterside offices, I have no doubt I could get you an offer. They do not pay high salaries there, but the hours are easy.'

David of course expressed his pleasure at hearing this, and also his readiness to accept any position. Then the young man had to hear, from father and daughter, an account of the injustice and cruelty of Mr Gadham, at which he was sympathetically indignant.

He turned the conversation, however, by suddenly exclaiming: 'I quite forgot! I have two Australian presents for Josie and Minnie.—Minnie's is the prettiest. What do you think it is?'

The pleased and blushing Minnie guessed several of the objects most dear to the girlish mind, but in vain.

'Nothing of the kind,' returned Geoffrey. 'It is a treasure from an Australian chief—his greatest treasure. A necklace, Minnie, beautifully made of the skin of a snake'—here both the girls shuddered—'and fibre from the bark of a tree, ornamented with twelve eye-teeth taken from the heads of his dead enemies—all taken by himself or his tribe.'

The girls, with something like a scream, protested against such a present; while even David gave it as his opinion that 'it would not do.'

'To tell you the truth, I do not think it would,' said Coyne, laughing. 'I could have had it, however, from my friend Jack—Cloudy Range Jack—who insisted upon giving me some little keepsake; so I chose two others, not half so much prized as the necklace had been.—A brooch for you, Minnie, studded with nuggets of gold, just as they came from the mine. The same for Josie, a trifle larger, with a circle of garnets as well.'

The brooches were produced, examined, fastened on, and pronounced 'lovely;' David adding that he thought it very generous of Mr Jack Cloudesley.

'No, no!' interrupted Coyne; 'not Cloudesley, but Cloudy Range Jack. I never knew his other name. There are plenty of men over there who are called after the ranges, or districts, or diggings where they have been working, and it is not

considered strict etiquette to inquire further. Jack had been living at Cloudy Range; so you see how he got his name. It was through a little adventure on his part—and I suppose on mine also—that we became such friends. One night I had been a few miles up the country, and while walking back I saw, by the light of the half-moon, two men standing under the shade of a tree, evidently hiding. I thought they were after no good, so went cautiously and on my guard towards them; but a man, walking in the other direction, came up first, and the thieves sprang upon him. He was knocked down by a blow which laid his head open, and I think they meant killing him; but, luckily, I was armed, and fired a couple of shots from my revolver at the fellows. They were both hit, but were able to make off; and I helped the stranger up. He went back to the city with me. He, as you have guessed, was Cloudy Range Jack, one of the best fellows I ever met; and I believe we shall be friends for life. But I did something after that which Mr Chester may not think very business-like.

'I don't suppose I shall set myself up for a judge of what is business-like or not,' said David, with a smile which was anything but cheerful; 'but let us hear it.'

'Well,' continued Coyne, after a moment's hesitation, 'Jack had heard of a land or mining spec. which he was sure was good, although the owner had grown tired of it; and as he gave me the chance, I joined him. It took my savings and an advance note on our agents; but at the worst, I can sell for what I gave; in fact, I had a slightly better offer before leaving; but Jack, who knows all about the spot, says he would not take ten times the money. This was only just before I sailed for home.'

David said nothing, though in his heart he did not think highly of the speculation—with a man whose name, even, Geoffrey did not know! But the girls were hopeful, as Geoffrey was.

On inquiry, Geoffrey found that his chief—the shipowner—was out of town, but was sure to return before the *Royal Oak* sailed, and the young man felt confident that his application on behalf of his old friend would be successful. So David Chester made up his mind to bear the delay hopefully; but every day made it worse and harder for the little family to struggle on, as Minnie earned but a trifle, while Josie had to toil very hard at the machine to provide even the plain food which satisfied them. The mother had been dead some years.

'Thank heaven!' the clerk was wont to say, 'she was spared this trouble.—I had thought, he would often continue, 'that I never, never could be reconciled to her loss; but now I can say I am thankful she is gone.'

Partly from force of habit, and partly because it was so dull and dreary to sit all day at home, the clerk made his usual visits to the City, and called occasionally at some friendly office, but with the invariable result. Upon a certain day, as Chester was going slowly home, tired as usual, and full of misgivings as to his young friend's influence proving sufficient to serve him, a voice, hearty, or at anyrate loud, exclaimed: 'David Chester!—honest old Davy once again! How are you, my old patriarch?' The person

who spoke was a tall man, well dressed, with a larger beard and moustache than is commonly seen, and he was probably nearer forty than thirty years of age. He smiled as he met the inquiring look of the old clerk, then, clapping him on the shoulder, laughed openly. 'Don't you know me?' he asked.

'Yes, yes; I think I do,' hesitatingly replied Chester; 'but I cannot call to mind where'—

'Ah! ah! you cannot!' laughed the other. 'Well, the middle of Aldersgate Street is not a good place for indulging in sentimental reminiscences. Come in here, and try if a glass or two of wine will not freshen your memory, although, David, I did not think a few years would have made such a difference.' He turned, and Chester followed him; the old fellow was not proof against the temptation of a glass of wine, a luxury unknown to him through all these dreary days of failure. Ensnared in the private bar of a tavern hard by, the stranger ordered the wine, and then faced Chester again.

'Do you mean to say that you cannot— Ah! I see you do, now,' he cried; 'I see it in your eyes.'

'Yes, I know you,' said Chester; 'you are Mr Ernest Gadham. I knew your voice at first, and there was something in you— But how changed you are! You are stouter; you had no beard or moustache in those days, and your dress'—

'All great improvements, no doubt you mean to say,' interrupted the other. 'Well, never mind those points. Here is your health, my old friend; I know you will pledge mine.'

David readily did so, and his companion proceeded: 'They thought—you know who I mean—that I was dead; they hoped it; and hearing nothing of me, believed it. I suppose you are not with them?'

This was a subject on which Chester required small pressing, and he launched out into a history of the firm of Brisby, Gadham, & Co., with lengthy episodes detailing his own grievances, and the atrocious treatment he had experienced at their hands.

'There has been foul-play among them,' said Ernest, when at last the history was finished. 'My poor old father did not bear such malice against me. You know he made a will in my favour, shortly before his death.'

'Did he indeed?' responded Chester, sympathetic in his turn.

'Did he!' echoed Ernest. 'Why, you know he did; you witnessed it, with Sperbrow—that ill-looking fellow who called himself my father's confidential clerk.'

'Yes, you are right,' assented Chester. 'I witnessed a will with Sperbrow; but I did not know what was in it. Was it in your favour?'

'Of course it was. And where is it now?' exclaimed Ernest. 'Those who benefited by the old will, no doubt could tell. But anyhow, I understand you to say you did witness a will with Sperbrow?'

'O yes; I can swear to that!' answered David. 'Where is Sperbrow now, I wonder?'

'Oh, he is dead long ago. Died in New York, I have heard,' said Ernest. 'If I had heard of his being hanged there, I should not have cared; it would have served him right.—Now, David,

what are your prospects? Perhaps I can help you a little, as I have still a few friends left. You want a situation, I suppose?'

This was another theme on which David's tongue was easily set in motion, and he told his hope of a situation at the docks. 'Oh, nonsense! That will not do for you,' said his listener. 'You would have to move from Kentish Town to the Isle of Dogs, or somewhere near; eighteen shillings a week salary, and be turned off directly business grew dull—not to speak of breaking up your home and losing the little connection your daughter has built up. No; that will never do.'

Had David been in a less excited mood, he might have felt some wonder as to how Mr Ernest should know that his daughter had a dress-making connection, as *he* had certainly not alluded to it; or, for the matter of that, he might have been surprised at Mr Ernest knowing that he had any daughters at all. Just now, however, he was hardly in the condition to analyse closely the utterances of such an unexpected friend, and felt nothing but the deepest gratitude when Ernest said he would call upon him next day, before which time he would consult some of his friends. And so they parted.

The clerk's exhilaration lasted after the effects of the wine had ceased, for now, at last, there was to be a change in his luck, and all the way home he was picturing brilliant visions of the future. Once or twice he found himself speculating as to the part of the conversation in which he had given Mr Ernest his address; he could not clearly make this out, so he dismissed it as of no consequence.

'And was Mr Sperbrow such an ill-looking, bad fellow as Mr Ernest describes, father?' asked Josie, when she had heard his story.

'No; I always thought him a very nice decent sort of party,' returned David. 'Perhaps Mr Ernest knows something more about him; but I never heard a word to his discredit, and I am sorry he is dead.'

Whether David had or had not given his address to Ernest, the latter was true to his word and called upon the clerk the next day. His manner was particularly pleasant when speaking to Josie, openly paying her compliments on her good looks, which, although well deserved, were embarrassing, and then excusing himself by referring to the rough society in which he had lived for a long time, which had rather unfitted him for English circles.

One of his friends, he mentioned in the course of conversation, was a person of much influence in the theatrical world, and so he, the speaker, was enabled to promise Miss Josie admission to some of the best theatres in London. Josie's eyes sparkled at this, and so did David's, for this was a treat rarely falling to their lot, and they were enthusiastic lovers of all dramatic exhibitions, from the circus, which they had seen, to the opera, which they had never seen, but pictured as something almost beyond mortal beauty.

Then as to David's future: one thing was certain, Mr Ernest explained, which was, that the clerk must give up all idea of drudging at the docks. He had already seen a gentleman, who had promised that at the turn of the season—poor David did not know what turn or what season was meant—he would give him a befitting

situation. Meanwhile—this was in a whispered conference apart from the girls—there was a five-pound note for present use; and he, Mr Ernest, would take care that his old friend Chester should not run short, until he was fairly lodged in such a berth as would enable him to manage properly.

The reader, then, may guess the impression left by Ernest Gadham, and the praises which were sounded on his departure, after a tolerably long visit. What made his conduct the more gratifying, as David explained to Geoffrey—who was, unfortunately, too late in his visit to see the gentleman—was, that he had no right to expect such kindness.

He had never been a special favourite with young Mr Gadham; on the contrary, though he did not like to say it, he had somewhat disliked the young man. He preferred to account for this marked kindness by supposing that Mr Ernest had been pained to find how he had been persecuted and punished merely for his devotion to the old firm, and felt that he ought to be compensated.

The praise of Mr Gadham did not diminish when, on the very next morning, tickets arrived—'Dress circle and all, father!' as Josie said, with something approaching to awe in her voice—for a popular play. It was not easy, in the face of Minnie's arguments, to decide who should use these tickets; but it was a great deal less easy to decide what Josie should wear on such a state occasion. A few tears of vexation found their way to the girl's eyes when she reviewed her scanty wardrobe. She was a thoroughly amiable girl, bright and cheerful, but she was mortal, and she was feminine, and it would be asking too much of feminine mortality to expect a girl of nineteen to be superior to such considerations. The tickets, it was decided, should be used by Josie and Geoffrey.

It was in the interval between the second and third acts of the last piece, when Josie was just beginning to regret that all would soon be over, that she gave a little start, and uttered an ejaculation which drew Geoffrey's attention.

In answer to his inquiry, she said: 'I have just seen Mr Gadham; I am sure it was him. Yes, there he is, leaning against the column in the corner. I think he saw me; but do not let us appear to be watching him.'

Geoffrey looked earnestly in the direction intimated, anxious to see their generous patron. He saw him leaning against the pillar as described; but a rush of returning seat-owners took place just then, in anticipation of the rising of the drop scene, and when this had subsided, he had either taken a seat where he was hidden, or he had left the house, for they could see him no longer. But as they were leaving the theatre at the close, they saw Mr Gadham emerge from a lobby at the foot of the stairs. He smiled at them, and waved his hand, then stopped, evidently intending to await them. But as he did so, a man, tall and well-dressed like himself, but scowling and ill-favoured—so Josie afterwards described him—came out from another lobby, and recognised Mr Gadham. The exclamation he uttered attracted the latter's attention, who started as he turned round, but shook the other's hand warmly; then both hurried off in the direction of the refreshment bar.

All this could be seen by Josie and her companion, for they were within a dozen steps of Mr Gadham when he disappeared. They were astonished and disappointed, and of course talked it over as they rode home in the omnibus. Geoffrey said it was no business of his, and Mr Gadham must do what he pleased, yet it was plain that for the time, his admiration of that gentleman had somewhat abated. He could not understand his conduct. 'And in fact,' said the young man, 'I do not quite understand what he means by this sudden friendship for your father, for whom he never seems to have cared before. I don't quite understand it—I really do not.'

FISH OVA AND FISHERY WASTE.

CONSIDERABLE attention has lately been directed to what is called 'fishery waste,' and by-and-by plans for the utilisation of much valuable material that is now entirely lost, or at least only partly made use of, will no doubt be devised. In the meantime, it may prove somewhat useful to show—even in that rough-and-ready way which can only, for want of definite information, be adopted—the difference between the seed sown, or not sown, and the harvest realised. The prodigious powers of reproduction with which nearly all fishes are endowed have been often noticed in connection with their natural history; nor, extraordinary as they may appear to those not familiar with the subject, has there been much exaggeration in the statements made. Taking the herring as an example, the fact of its fecundity can be easily ascertained and established. Throughout Scotland, it is a condition of 'the cure' that the fish salted must be 'full fish'—in other words, must contain the whole of their spawning substance, in order to entitle them to be branded by the Fishery officers, as a mark of their having been cured in the manner prescribed by the Fishery Board. By means of this rule, we obtain an opportunity of becoming familiar with the reproductive power of the herring. Cured herrings from Loch Fyne and elsewhere in Scotland are on sale in many places, and as most of them contain their roes (and milts), we thus find out that the eggs of the herring are almost incredibly numerous, especially when it is taken into account that the fish is not a big one; as a rule, it requires two and a half, and sometimes three or even more herrings to weigh a pound. To ascertain the number of eggs in the roe of a herring is not a difficult task. The simplest plan is to tie the roe in a bit of muslin cloth and drop it for a couple of minutes into boiling water; then carefully weigh the whole mass of roe; after which, cut the ligatures that bind the eggs together, and fill a thimble with the ova. Count the number of eggs in the measure; finish the process by weighing the lot, that is, the thimbleful; and then you possess the clue to the total figure, which is obtained by dividing the weight of the whole by the

weight of the thimbleful. A herring roe usually weighs about an ounce, less or more; and the number of eggs—taking a reasonable average, formed from the counting of some score of roes—will be thirty-one thousand.

The destruction of fish ova annually is enormous, and is not confined to any one fish, as will be shown when we come to consider the case of the cod and haddock. As regards the waste of herring-roes—in one night's fishing at a well-known herring-fishery where, during the season, from eight hundred to one thousand boats are usually at work, it has been ascertained that many barrels of spawn—literal tons, in fact—are wasted because of the fish of the shoal hit upon being almost in the act of spawning. Instead of being restored to the sea, the ova are usually sold to farmers for manure along with other offal! That the eggs so disposed of are ripe, is proved by their exuding freely from the fish; and as they have had the chance of being well mixed while in the boats with the milt of the male herring, the proportion of the sexes being about equal—a case, as we may say, of accidental pisciculture—they would, in all probability, had they been restored to the water whence the herrings which produced them were taken, have hatched, and thus contributed to the millions of fish destined to compose future shoals. Despite such waste, herrings continue, according to some accounts, to be more abundant than ever. During the fishing season of 1885, it may be considered to be pretty near the truth if we state that about two million barrels of herrings were captured off the Scottish coasts. Of that quantity, 1,572,952 barrels were cured; whilst the remainder were sold directly from the boats as fresh herrings; and as each barrel contains at least seven hundred, we can arrive at an idea of the total number captured in one season, which we place at 1,400,000,000 of individual fish. But man, it has been affirmed, with all his cunning devices of capture makes almost no impression on the herring shoals. It has been computed that cod and other fish will consume every year 29,400,000,000. Another factor in the figures of herring consumption is the number eaten by gannets, which has been estimated at 1,110,000,000 of individual herrings. Dogfish and the numerous other enemies of the *Clupeidae* may be set down as consuming every year as many herrings as are taken by the fishermen of the United Kingdom, which brings out a total in this range of calculation of say 35,000,000,000 of these fish. What, it has more than once been asked, will be the dimensions of a shoal of herrings? It is not possible to do more, we fear, than guess at the area occupied; but if the spaces taken up by all the public parks of the kingdom were joined together and filled with herrings five deep, the area so obtained would not probably be so large as some of the Scottish shoals. On some places off the Scottish coasts as many, perhaps, as a thousand boats will be fishing on the same evening, each boat carrying a train of nets extending from two to three miles in length; and that extent of netting will enable our readers to judge how numerous the fish must be that require such an engine of capture.

The herring has been designated the 'poor man's fish;' and the salmon may certainly be

called the fish of the rich man; it has been named the 'venison of the waters.' A sixty-pound salmon is nearly all the year round of more value than a Southdown sheep. These fine fish when brought to market range in weight from about eight to thirty-five pounds; but occasional big ones are taken which vary from thirty-eight to sixty pounds; such fish are not, however, very plentiful. Taken all over, salmon average not less than twenty pounds per fish, though a few years ago the average had sunk to eighteen pounds. Grilse, the young or unspawned member of the salmon family, generally run from four to seven pounds; and the average weight of these fish may be taken at five and a half pounds. A salmon of the weight of about twenty-five pounds will yield twenty thousand eggs. These must be deposited in fresh water—although the fish is also able to live in the sea—and require from one hundred to one hundred and twenty days to hatch, according to temperature. During a very mild winter, the period of hatching is not so prolonged as it is in severe weather. In protected places under cover, salmon ova hatch in from sixty-five to seventy-five days; but in the old ponds at Stormontfield, on the river Tay, and in the river, the eggs seldom yielded their young under a period of four months. Although the salmon, as compared with the herring, may be said to deposit its eggs in a protected place—in the tributary waters, that is to say, of some great salmon stream—a vast number of them are wasted. Spawning takes place in the running water, so that many of the eggs exuded are rapidly borne along by the rushing stream, and are lost so far as the future salmon supply is concerned. Under such circumstances, thousands of the eggs escape the fertilising power of the milt of the male fish, while further thousands are devoured by numerous enemies, which hover around to prey upon them, many kinds of birds being among the number, while the trout inhabiting the same stream of water gorge themselves with the dainty morsels.

In offering any remarks on the stock and marketable fish of a salmon-river, it must be borne in mind that a given expanse of water will only breed and feed a given number of fish. It is not a little remarkable that while it is somewhat of a merit to capture herrings while full of their spawning matter, salmon when filled with milt and roe are protected by statute; for such fish there is a close-time, and during its observance it is a crime to capture them. It ought to be known that during their spawning seasons fish, as a rule, are unfit for food, their flesh being poor, watery, and probably unwholesome, in consequence of their fat-forming materials being diverted to the formation of their reproductive substances.

The sea-fish which are endowed with the power of reproducing their kind in millions are the conger eel, the turbot, the cod-fish, and two or three of its congeners. Examples of the conger containing from six to fifteen million ova have not been unfrequent, and yet this fish is very rarely seen in our fish-markets or fishmongers' shops: there seems to be a prejudice against it. Congers are frequently sold in foreign fish-markets. Abroad, that member of the eel family seems to be appreciated. Its flesh is excel-

lent, and highly susceptible to the art of the cook.

The classic turbot yields its eggs in millions; one of these fish, weighing twenty-three pounds, being found to contain a mass of roe that, when manipulated, was resolved into fourteen million eggs. The turbot, although not what may be termed a scarce fish, is not so plentiful as it apparently ought to be, judging from its reproductive power. Taking it all the year round, the turbot is a costly fish, and much dearer usually in London and other large cities and towns than even the salmon. Forty years ago, a turbot could be purchased at many places on the Scottish seaboard for twenty pence, that could not now be bought for the same number of shillings. A considerable number of the turbot which are sold in Billingsgate are brought from Holland by Dutch fishermen. It is to be regretted that large numbers of very young turbot are frequently caught in the trawl-nets, in which they are suffocated by the weight of other fish. These are lost to the table.

As has been indicated, the cod-fish and two or three of the other members of the *Gadidae* family yield their eggs in millions; the roe of a large cod-fish will weigh seven or eight pounds, and will contain from five to eight million ova. Actual counting is the best guide to the number of eggs which any single fish contains. In America, the number of eggs in various individual fish have been ascertained by actual counting. In each of two cod, which weighed seventy pounds, the number of ova exceeded nine million, the net weight of the mass of eggs being in each case eight pounds two ounces. In other examples, the eggs ranged from about nine million in a fifty-one-pound cod-fish, to nearly three million in one which weighed twenty-one pounds.

The herring, taking its size into account, is as prolific as the cod. Estimating the common run of these *Clupeidae* at three and a half fish to the pound, it would take about seventy herrings to equal the weight of a twenty-one-pound cod-fish, and such a number of herrings would yield, in all probability, considerably more than three million ova. The cod-fish is wonderfully abundant within the range of its habitat. The officers of the Scottish Fishery Board, in accordance with instructions, keep a note of the quantity cured under their superintendence. From a special Report, we learn that, in the course of one year, three and a half million of cod, ling, and hake were caught to be cured in Scotland, whilst a large number was also taken to be sold fresh. But the take of cod in Scottish waters is small when compared with the total number of these fish which are caught all over the world. We have it on pretty good authority that in a recent year seventy-five million of cod-fish were taken from European waters, and seventy-nine million and a half from American waters; while half that number, it is thought, will be wasted in the prosecution of the fishery. As for the numbers of these animals that never arrive at maturity, it would be vain to make an attempt at computation. With regard to the eggs which float on the water till the infant fish is able to burst from its fragile prison, millions upon millions fall a prey to the numerous animals which seem created to devour them.

In addition to what may be termed the accidental losses occurring from causes over which man has no control, there is carried on, chiefly from Norway, a trade in cod-roe, which is always in demand by the French fishermen for use as a ground-bait. Seventy thousand barrels filled with the roes of the cod were exported from Norway in the year 1880; and as each barrel on the average will contain three hundred roe-bags, we have thus a total of twenty-one million cod-roes put to a non-productive purpose.

The roes, as we may say, are an accident of the cod-fishery. Cod-fish are not caught purposely in order to obtain their eggs; but fish with spawn being taken, that substance is at once utilised by being salted down for export to France. When the trawl-net is hauled on board, it contains a vast percentage of immature fish, which are usually rejected, and thrown into the water; but as many of them are dead, they are lost to the future. In line-fishing, the capture of the animal living is what is always aimed at, as one living cod-fish is worth three or four dead ones. A cargo of live cod is valuable, as the fish can be housed in perforated boxes, and be killed for market as the demand arises. Fish so caught, if about to spawn, ought to be restored to the water.

Another member of the cod-fish family which is also wonderfully abundant is known as the haddock, and is really an excellent and much appreciated table-fish, either served fresh, or smoked as a 'Finnan haddie.' Nearly two million eggs have been found in one of these fish, the weight of which was nine and a half pounds. There is almost no other fish which is brought to market in such quantities in an immature state. This can be seen by any person who will take the trouble, during the earlier months of the year, to glance at the displays of haddock in our fishmongers' shops, where hundreds of these small fish may be seen that have never had the chance of spawning, and most of which are not more than three or four ounces in weight—'fine frying fish, five to the pound.'

Those fish which seem to have been from the beginning destined to the frying-pan, the toothsome flounder and others of the flat-fish family, are also wonderfully fecund, and yield very large numbers of eggs. Selecting the sole as an example. It is one of our most popular fishes. It is certain that during the last twenty years we have been eating more soles than the stock can fairly yield; in other words, the sole is being 'overfished.' One would suppose that a fish which yields its eggs in hundreds of thousands would always be plentiful; but in the case of the sole we have evidence to the contrary. It has been fished for as if the stock would never go down, and thousands of soles are sold which are a long way from maturity. 'Slips' these little fish are called, and they are not bigger than a dainty lady's hand, say a hand for which 'number sixes' would be almost too large. No soles ought to be brought to market which are below the size of a big man's foot. Evidence has been offered of the destruction of immature soles which is constantly taking place. Hundreds of thousands are annually captured which those who capture them are afraid to bring on shore, they are so small.

As regards the common flounder, the fact has been placed on record that on one occasion two and a half million of these fish were taken. The plaice is a plentiful fish—over thirty-three million of it have reached Billingsgate and been disposed of in the course of a year. In one particular season, the consignments to that piscatorial bourse of the smaller flat-fishes became so great, the fish being so plentiful, that on some especial days they were given away in any quantity to all who came for them. The largest of all the flat-fishes is the halibut, examples of which have been taken weighing from twenty-five to eighty pounds. That fish is also a prolific breeder.

From the figures already given, and others which might be adduced, if further proof were necessary, the difference between the seed sown and the harvest gathered is not a little startling. The seed is sown in millions, but it is only in thousands the harvest is gathered. A time is coming, however, when such waste as is really preventable will be prevented. As has been hinted in the course of the preceding remarks, fishermen have but little chance of selection, and can only capture such fish as enter their nets; hence the vast numbers of small and immature haddocks and soles which are offered for sale in our fishmongers' shops. Hence also it is that about Easter the roes of our chief round-fish are always to be seen on sale. These can be so cooked as to form appetising *plats*, and having been obtained, it is proper they should be utilised; but, nevertheless, the fact of tons of this spawn being on sale shows us in some degree the fishery waste that is always going forward. The philosophy of a close-time is that fish may have leave to spawn unmolested by man; but so long as it is a condition of the herring-fishery that only 'full herrings' can receive the highest brand, there can never be any rest for that popular and abundant fish; indeed, it seems to be a condition of nature that these animals of the great deep are most accessible to man at that season of their lives only when they stand most in need of his protection.

SHADOWS OF THE PAST.

I sit alone. The night-wind sighs about my humble biggin. The streets are quiet, for the old clock 'ben the hoose' has just struck twelve, and my thoughts, as they are wont, wander listlessly about the room. The flickering fire reflects its fitful light about me, and casts weird shadows along the floor, for my lamp has burned low. From picture on to picture my eyes wander; but the uncertain light will not stay with them. The oaken sideboard, which has been an heirloom in the family now for generations, stands dull and dead beside me. The otherwise meagre furnishings of my lonely room offer little food for meditation, and I gaze upon the dying embers before me until the glowing tiny casements fall one by one in total wreck and ruin, and their place is marked by blackened ashes.

Upon the mantel-shelf are ranged, with studious care, the little trinkets of a happier time. Here, my mother's tiny oaken workbox, beneath the

unlocked lid of which are placed her silver thimble, that she loved so well ; her needles, now besmeared with rust, from lack of use ; and her little odds and ends, so needful once, and once so much respected. And there is father's silver snuff-box, with initialed lid and well-carved top ; and when I take it from its place, the happier past reveals itself to me. I see his comely face reflected on the lid ; I hear his kindly voice speak words of homely comfort and correction, as I have often heard in days gone by. I look, and as I look, the face is gone, and the merry chat of old familiar friends, friends of my father's, strikes upon my ear. The merry song, the merrier laugh, the joyful click of glasses when the toasts are pledged—these bring me back to past festivities, rare, though always happy. The sounds and faces vanish. I open wide the lid, and in the corners of the box there still are seen small particles of my father's favourite snuff. Even now, it has not lost its flavour ; and as its minute atoms seek my brain, I think I sit once more with him in the 'auld kirk at hame.' I hear us chant in dragging measures the solemn psalm, and favourite of my father's, 'Old Hundred.' I hear the earnest pastor pray, and the lesson read ; and when the sermon is begun, I see the 'snuff-mull' passed from hand to hand ; and involuntarily, I stretch it out at arm's-length, even now. Old faces, familiar with their friendliness, appear before me one by one ; and forms that I used to know stand betwixt me and the fire. I shut the snuff-box lid, and faces and forms sink away from me. But what is this that lies beside the box ? A silver watch with dimpled case. Ah ! that, too, tells its tale ! Full many a time I have seen that old watch wound and carried forth in hands that used to hold me as a child, and clasp in firm grip with mine in meetings and partings of the later years. I have seen it in its brighter days, when its works were active, and not dead, as they have been for so long ! Its owner too ! Ah me ! how short and yet how long it seems since he took me on his knee and told the story of that very watch.

'The dimple on the case ?' he'd say, in answer to my childish query. 'Why, my lad, I've told you that a thousand times, I'm sure.' And now, I hear the story told again. I see the opposing forces stand at Waterloo ; I hear the heavy guns burst in upon my ear, the yells of pain and shouts of exhortation ; and among the British ranks stands one I know to be my father. The bullets, bringing death, whiz past in fast succession. I watch my father with his brave companions fighting in the thickest of the fray. I fear his death, and pray for his deliverance. A bullet strikes his breast. 'O God,' I cry, 'he's gone !' I look again ; but still he fights right manfully. How is this ? That silver watch guarded the spot which the bullet struck. My father's life was saved ! I hear a cheer that shakes the earth on which I stand ; I see the stubborn foe disperse

like chaff ; and now I know that Waterloo is won. The scene of carnage melts away. I put the watch back to its sacred place, just as the dying notes of victory touch my ear.

Beside the watch there lies a time-stained case. I open it, and find therein my father's and my mother's spectacles. As I draw them from their place, I am once more a reckless lad at home. I sit before the glowing fire, upon the favourite footstool at my mother's knee. She wears her spectacles ; and as she strokes my head with her soft hand, I hear my father's voice. Before him lies the 'big ha' Bible,' and from its well-thumbed page he reads the 'old, old story.' Worship done, I feel the gentle pressure of my mother's lips as I say 'Good-night' to her. Again I look at them, and other scenes break in upon my view. My father sits in his armchair and reads ; while mother plies her stocking-wires, that always went so fast, and all to keep her 'dear boy' and his father comfortable.

Again I am a schoolboy, and once more I see my father 'put his glasses on,' and with the handle of his snuff-spoon, point the lines as I decipher them.

I close the case, and as I try to think, the solemn strains of music strike upon my ear. It is the deep notes of a funeral service. My father's chair is empty, and my mother weeps. A sad and slow procession wends its way along the country road ; and now I stand within an old churchyard, close beside an open grave. I see the coffin lowered, and something tells me that it is my father's. I hear the sullen thud of the dank mould upon the coffin lid. I feel my senses reel—and then there is a blank which I can never fill.

I put the ancient case away, and as I do so, a curious tremor seizes hold on me. I stand beside a bed, and on it lies my mother. I watch her as her fitful breath tells that the flickering flame of life is all but gone. I feel her press my hand, and hear her tell me, in a faltering whisper, not to grieve, but to put my faith in Christ, and we should meet again, though not on earth. Again I stand beside an open grave and sob, as her 'narrow bed' is hidden from my sight ; and then the melancholy scene falls back and disappears.

Once more I scan the mantel-shelf, and there, half hidden in a crevice of the wall, I see a tiny paper parcel. I open it, and find within a lock of yellow hair. Ah me ! that golden ringlet opens out a volume of the past. I feel that I am young again and full of hope. The moon shines down upon the glassy lake, and I stroll listlessly with a fair companion along the woodland path, and speak of love and future happiness. I feel the gentle pressure of my loved one's hand, and hear her tell me that she'll aye be mine ! But darker days come on. I watch the progress of that dry, harsh cough ; I see the face grow wan and pinched, the eyes grow dull, the shoulders stoop, the hands grow thinner by degrees. She tells me she is dying ; and I know she speaks the awful truth. My hopes and aspirations fall, for they were all built up in that sweet form ! I watch her while

she dies—by day and night I watch, till the change comes, and I am left alone! But on the evening that her spirit fled, she gave me that yellow curl from off her head, and there and then I vowed to keep it sacred.

I hear the old clock chime the hour of two; I look around me, and the room is dark. My fire is out; my oil-lamp burns low; and I have been amidst the Shadows of the Past.

OCCASIONAL NOTES.

MEMORIAL TO MOZART.

AFTER much discussion, it has at length been decided that Mozart is to have a statue erected to his memory in front of the Opera House at Vienna, which is said to be one of the finest and most appropriate sites that could have been selected throughout the city. The design for the statue it is understood will be thrown open to competition. Public and private subscriptions have at present brought in upwards of five thousand two hundred pounds, so that it is to be hoped that the memorial will be one worthy of him who was not only one of the most accomplished musicians of his day, but the most graceful and melodious of writers, and who raised the tone of opera in Germany to the high position it subsequently obtained and retained. The music of Mozart, whether sacred or secular, will surely live in the hearts and minds of all true lovers of the 'divine art,' and of all who can appreciate the polished melodies of genius wedded to the learned harmonies of science, so long as music itself exists. But, by a strange irony of fate, Mozart, the amiable and gifted composer, popular everywhere, admired by all, died a very poor man; and his son was allowed to eke out a precarious existence by teaching music in the capital where upwards of five thousand pounds has been readily subscribed for the erection of a statue to the father, who was in his own day left almost to the tender mercies of poverty!

THE EXTINCT AUSTRALIAN LION.

It has long been a disputed point, and indeed a vexed question, as to whether the so-called great Australian lion ever existed. Some interesting discoveries, however, have been recently made in the Wellington Caves, New South Wales, of undoubted remains of this animal. The bones are at present deposited in the Mines Department Museum, Sydney, and consist of several very complete jawbones, containing the teeth in an excellent state of preservation. Prior to being publicly exhibited, they were submitted to the inspection of Professor Sir Richard Owen, of the British Museum; and his opinion is, that the animal was a marsupial or pouch-bearing lion, fully equal in size to the existing African species. Discoveries of leonine remains have at various times been made in New South Wales, and also in Victoria, and the specimens in question are well preserved. They have been excavated from post-pleiocene deposits; and in connection with them were the remains of what are known as the Tasmanian Tiger and the Tasmanian Devil. An equally interesting fact is that Professor Owen, when referring, many years ago, to the herbivorous characteristics of the 'Australian Diprotodon,'

expressed his conviction that some large carnivorous animal must have been co-existent with him, to keep the race in check, and that probably lions then inhabited Australia, an hypothesis which has been fully verified. These facts are interesting, as helping to establish the fact of the existence in former ages of the lion in Australia.

FRIENDSHIP'S MESSAGE.

I.

FRIEND ever faithful, as I sit alone,
Sad as the gloaming that infolds me round,
Dead embers dropping on the white hearthstone
Fall on mine ear with melancholy sound,
And the low winds are sighing with regret,
Though dying day is faintly smiling yet.

II.

The moon has risen o'er the silent street
Like the pure soul of the departed day,
Shedding from heaven a benediction sweet,
The while her silvery beams like spirits stray,
With noiseless footsteps through my open door,
And gently wander o'er the cottage floor.

III.

Dreams of delightful moments passed with thee
Come to me, dearest, with this pensive hour;
Through shadowy trees thy lilac robe I see
Sweeping so lightly o'er each alumberous flower;
I see the dewdrops twinkling here and there,
'Mid the dark tresses of thy clustering hair.

IV.

As with the tinkling brook our voices blend,
I mark the flush upon thy dimpling cheek,
And whisper softly in thine ear: 'Sweet friend,
They know thee not who say the world is bleak;
To me at least 'tis neither bleak nor drear,
So long as thy warm heart is throbbing near.'

V.

And as I speak, my hand steals into thine,
Like a tired bird that seeks some resting-place;
I know, I feel, thy precious love is mine,
By thy fond eyes and sympathetic face.
My voice is trembling, as I tell thee how
Life would be dark without thy friendship now.

VI.

Let it be changeless, dear, through good and ill.
When friends less loved shall coldly pass me by,
I will not mourn, if thou art faithful still.
How could I miss them, sweet, when thou art nigh?
Ah, I could even smile, and let them go,
Content with thee, because I love thee so.

VII.

When sorrow's tears have dimmed thy gentle eyes,
Thy sacred grief shall chain me to thy side:
He will not shrink from cold December skies,
Who won thy friendship in the summer's pride:
Then in our hearts shall summer roses blow,
For love alone can thaw the wintry snow.

FANNY FORRESTER.

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